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The Secret to Making a Great First Impression in Japanese

Learn about introducing yourself

Mark Complete

Also Appears In: Living in Japan, Newbie Season 1

Dialogue - Japanese

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Kanji English Rōmaji Hiragana All

A: すみません。山口さんですか。

B: はい、そうです。

A: 初めまして。渡辺です。

B: 初めまして。山口です。

A: どうぞよろしく。

B: どうぞよろしく。

Vocabulary

Hide

English Kana Rōmaji

すみません [すみません]
Excuse me

2 EXAMPLES

すみません。ここは私の席だと思うのですが。
Excuse me, I think this is my seat you are sitting on.
お客様、すみません。
Excuse me, sir/ma'am.

そうです [そうです]
That's right

初めまして [はじめまして]
How do you do?

です [です]
Polite form of the copula

1 EXAMPLE

いま、なんじですか。
What time is it now?

どうぞよろしく [どうぞよろしく]
Please be kind to me

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Lesson Notes

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Lesson Focus

Sumimasen roughly corresponds to the English "I'm sorry" or "excuse me." You can use this in cases where you make a mistake or accidentally do something, like bump into someone on the street or step on someone's foot in a train. It is especially pertinent in the last case. If you've ever ridden a Tokyo train during rush hour, you can definitely relate! This phrase can also be used to get someone's attention, such as a waiter, waitress or the chef at the *kaiten* sushi place. *Kaiten* refers to revolving sushi. Finally, it can be used to express thanks or appreciation. For example, if a waiter/waitress brings you some food, you can say this to show your appreciation.

The expression *hajimemashite* is derived from the verb *hajimeru* , which means "to begin." Literally translated, the expression means "for the first time." However, as the phrase is used when you meet someone for the first time, a more accurate English translation is "How do you do?" or "Nice to meet you./Good to meet you." This phrase is often the first thing said when introducing oneself and is appropriate for all politeness levels.

This is followed by the speaker's last name and the polite form of the copula (linking verb) *desu*. *Desu* is roughly equivalent to the English verb "to be." You will gain a better understanding of the copula and how it's used in time.

Dōzo means "please."

Yoroshii is the polite form of the adjective *yo*, which means "good, nice." In today's dialogue, *yoroshii* is its in adverbial form - *yoroshiku*. The expression that follows, *onegai shimasu*, is based on the verb *negau* which means "to wish." The expression is interpreted to mean please, and it can be used as a stand alone expression when the speaker asks for something or for someone to do something. The expression *yoroshiku onegai shimasu* can take on many different meanings depending on its usage context. In today's conversation, it is used in the context of meeting someone for the first time, and therefore is interpreted as "Please be kind to me." This nuance is conveyed when using this expression in this context.

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Grammar

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Below is a list of the grammar points introduced or used in this lesson. Click for a full explanation.

いい ii
good — *Introduced*

です desu
to be (copula) — *Introduced*

だ da
be (copula) — *Introduced*

~始める ~hajimeru
begin to, start to — *Introduced*

Kanji

Hide

KANJI	READING	MEANING	1ST CHARACTER	2ND CHARACTER
初めまして	はじ・めまして	For the first time	初・First	
山口	やま・ぐち	Yamaguchi	山・Mountain	口・Mouth
渡辺	わた・なべ	Watanabe	渡・Transit	辺・Area

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